

Public Notice

In reply refer to

Issuance Date:

Public Notice No. 200301233

August 20, 2004

Stream:

Expiration Date:

Ewing Fork

September 20, 2004

Address comments to:

US Army Corps of Engineers, Huntington District

502 Eighth Street ATTN: CELRH-F

Huntington, West Virginia 25701-2070

PUBLIC NOTICE

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: The following application has been submitted for a Department of the Army Permit under the provisions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. This notice serves as the Corps of Engineers' request to the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection to act on Section 401 Water Quality Certification for the following application.

APPLICANT:

Kingston Resources, Inc.

400 Patterson Lane

Charleston, West Virginia 25311-1570

LOCATION: The proposed project is located in Ewing Fork and three of its unnamed tributaries and in an unnamed tributary of Toney Fork near Pax, approximately 1.9 miles northeast of Clear Creek, in the Clear Fork District of Raleigh County, West Virginia as depicted on **Drawing 1** of this public notice.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED WORK: The applicant proposes to construct five valley fills (1, 1A, 2, 3 and 4) and six associated sediment ponds (1, 1A, 2, 3, 4 and 5) in conjunction with the Ewing Fork No. 2 Surface Mine. The construction of the proposed valley fills would result in the discharge of fill material into approximately 17,749 linear feet or 3.378 acres of waters of the United States (U.S.). Of this total, 7,524 linear feet (1.665 acres) is intermittent stream impacts and 10,225 linear feet (1.713 acres) is ephemeral stream impacts. Further, approximately 1,920 linear feet or 0.345 acre of intermittent and ephemeral stream channels would be temporarily impacted by the construction of the proposed sediment ponds. In total, approximately 19,669 linear feet or 3.723 acres of waters of the U.S. would be impacted by the proposed project. **Table A** of this public notice details the proposed mining activities and corresponding information with respect to the proposed impact locations and stream loss (linear feet and acres). All of the proposed valley fills would drain watersheds of less than 250 acres and range from 29.66 acres to 213.26 acres as detailed on the **Table B** of this public notice.

The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) is currently reviewing the applicant's Surface Mining Permit application (S-3018-03) pursuant to the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977.

The proposal is a contour operation that would recover approximately 3.1 million tons of the Peerless No. 2 Group, Peerless No. 1 Group, No. 2 Gas Rider, Lower Campbells Creek, Upper Powellton, Powellton, Eagle A and Eagle coal seams. The proposed operation would generate approximately 58 million cubic yards (CY) of overburden, of which over 11.9 million CY would be excess spoil that would be placed in the proposed valley fill sites as shown on **Table C** of this public notice. The type of material placed in the valley fills would consist of rock and soil overburden that is excavated during the mining operation. Approximately 426.29 acres of land would be disturbed,

including 273.50 acres of mineral removal area, 128.92 acres of disturbed area, and 23.87 acres of drainage control structures.

The Ewing Fork No. 2 Surface Mine would begin at the end of the existing reclaimed surface mine operated by Costain Coal Company in the early 1990s and would also include an over-bond area associated with a current Kingston surface mine Permit No. S-3007-03. Coal haulage from the proposed operation would be accomplished via trucks to the Kingston preparation plant. The proposed project would be accomplished in six general phases as discussed below.

Phase I

The mine would commence production in the southeast portion of the permit area at the head of an unnamed tributary of Toney Fork. Initial contour mining would progress in phases, beginning with drilling activity on the No. 2 Gas seam level, and progress around the point between Ewing Fork and the unnamed tributary of Toney Fork where Valley Fill 1 would be constructed. Ponds 1 and 5 would be constructed and certified prior to disturbance in each respective drainage area. Overburden removal would take place from the No. 2 Gas seam down to the Lower Campbells Creek coal horizon. Once this coal is removed, overburden removal would progress to the Powellton seam horizon in the same pits.

Overburden from the initial cuts would be utilized to upgrade the existing road between the mining area and the Reeds Branch Valley Fill area. Material not disposed of in the road upgrade would be deposited in the Reeds Branch Valley Fill and/or Spoil Disposal Area 2. As the Powellton coal is mined, a second working area would be started and additional pits developed on a cut-through between Ewing Fork and the Valley Fill 1 area in order to shorten the haul distance for overburden to the road upgrade area and the Reeds Branch Valley Fill.

A third working area would be developed on the point between Reeds Branch and Ewing Fork and would allow point removal mining down to and including the Eagle seam. All overburden produced during Phase I mining would be utilized in upgrading the road to the Reeds Branch Valley Fill or deposited in the Reeds Branch Valley or in Spoil Disposal Area 2. The following sediment ditches, (or temporary sediment control) would be constructed during Phase I: SD-G1A, SD-61B, SD-H1A, SD-H1B, SD-I1A, SD-I1B, SD-K1A, SD-K1B, SD-L1A, SD-L1B, SD-M1A, SD-M1B, SD-M3A, SD-M3B, SD-3, SD-2B, and SD-2A.

The total disturbance and unreclaimed area during Phase I would be 63.90 acres, which represents 15-percent of the total permit area. During Phase I, no reclamation would be performed as the job is "opened up." The ancillary facilities would be 32.89 acres for this phase.

Phase II

As the Powellton seam is developed in the initial areas of the mine in Ewing Fork, an access road connecting the Powellton with the Eagle seams would be developed to allow mining operations to begin in the Eagle horizon. Contour cuts would be taken utilizing the Eagle A seam crop as a drill bench. The Eagle and Upper Eagle seams would be mined. Additional contour pits would be developed along the south side of Ewing Fork, utilizing the Powellton seam floor as a drill bench allowing mining activities to begin on the Eagle A seam.

As mining activity progresses in the Eagle horizon, mining would continue in the upper seams as the point removal between Reeds Branch and Ewing Fork is completed and contour cuts are developed along the south side of Ewing Fork. Excess spoil from the Eagle cuts would be deposited in Valley Fill 1 and back in the pits. Excess spoil from the upper seams would be deposited in Spoil Disposal Area 2 and along the highwall as reclamation of the upper seam highwall begins. No additional sediment control structures would be constructed during Phase II. Sediment Ponds 1A, 2 and 3 would be constructed and certified in advance of disturbance during Phase II. Sediment ditches (SD-F7, SD-F6B, SD-F6A, SD-F5, SD-4A, SD-F3A, SD-F3B, SD-F2B, SD-F2A and SD-E1B) would be constructed in advance of disturbance in the respective drainage areas.

A total of 45.18 acres would be unreclaimed at the end of Phase II, which represents 11-percent of the total permit area. Reclamation of 26.59 acres would occur and a cumulative acreage of 34.21 would be ancillary facilities.

Phase III

Haul roads are maintained through the pits developed in Phase II to minimize hauls for excess spoil to be placed in Valley Fill 1. As the Eagle horizon is mined in Ewing Fork, initial contour cuts would advance ahead of the ongoing area mining operations in the main body of the Eagle reserve. Subsequently, the upper seam mining would continue through the head of Ewing Fork with contour cuts from the Lower Campbells Creek horizon through the Powellton seam.

Second cuts would then be taken on these initial contour cuts and would reach a point on the south side of Ewing Fork near its head. Excess spoil from the Eagle horizon would be deposited back in the pits, Valley Fill 1, Valley Fill 1A, and Valley Fill 2. Excess spoil from the upper seams would be placed back against the highwall and deposited in the mined-out Eagle seam areas. During Phase III, 92.44 acres would be disturbed, 26.77 acres would be reclaimed, and ancillary facilities acreage would be 59.66 (cumulative). This would leave 110.85 acres unreclaimed, which is 26-percent of the total permit area.

Phase IV

Mining on the upper seams progresses through the head of Ewing Fork and around onto the north side of Ewing Fork. These cuts must be developed as rapidly as is feasible in order to allow work to begin on a cut-through that would provide access to the Horse Creek Surface Mine (Permit No. S-3015-99). Second cuts on the initial Powellton contour cuts have reached the head of Ewing Fork and started on the north side. Eagle seam contour mining has progressed to the head of Ewing Fork. Area mining in the Eagle seam would continue on the south side of Ewing Fork. Excess spoil from these mining areas would be deposited in previously mined areas of the Eagle and Powellton seams as well as in Valley Fill 2. During Phase IV, sediment ditches SD-E1A and SD-D1B would be constructed and certified prior to mining in the respective drainage acreage. Pond 4 would be constructed and certified prior to activity in the watershed.

An additional 63.41 acres would be disturbed while 68.51 acres are reclaimed during Phase III. A total of 105.75 acres would be unreclaimed or 24-percent of the total permit area. A cumulative total of 63.37 acres represents the ancillary facilities during Phase IV.

Phase V

In this phase, mining would continue in the Eagle horizon with all but one pit being mined. Valley Fill 3 in the head of Ewing Fork and Valley Fill 4 on the north side of Ewing Fork would accept excess spoil from these mining areas. Upper seam mining would continue as the initial contour cuts reach the end of the ridge above the mouth of Ewing Fork and the second cuts are completed on the north side of Ewing Fork. As soon as the initial contour cuts on the upper seams in the area of the cut-through between Ewing Fork and Horse Creek are completed, the second cuts in this area would be started in order to facilitate the development of the cut-through. The cut-through would be developed down to the Peerless seam during this phase. Excess spoil is placed against the highwall and in Valley Fill 3 and 4. The following sediment ditches would be constructed and certified prior to disturbance: SD-D1A, SD-C1B, SD-C1A, SD-B1B, SD-B1A, SD-A2B, SD-A2A, SD-A1, SD-A3A, SD-A3B and SD-A2A.

A total of 106.61 (25-percent of total permit) acres would be unreclaimed at the end of Phase V. Reclamation acreage is 71.28, while 72.14 acres are disturbed during this phase. The cumulative ancillary acreage is 75.31 during this phase.

Phase VI

Development of the cut-through from Ewing Fork to Horse Creek is completed during this phase and allows mining operations to progress into Horse Creek (Permit No. S-3015-99). Mining in the Eagle horizon and in the Powellton through Peerless horizons in Ewing Fork is completed during this phase. Excess spoil from the mining operations is placed in Valley Fill 4 and along the highwalls and in the pits to complete final reclamation of this permitted area. A total of 51.22 acres would be disturbed while 157.83 acres would be reclaimed to finish Ewing Fork No. 2 Surface Mine. No additional sediment control structures would be constructed in Phase VI.

According to the applicant, the purpose of the project is to construct valley fills to dispose of excess overburden spoil generated by surface mining operations into waters of the United States in order to achieve optimal recovery of available coal reserves within the project area and to provide the mandatory sediment control and access.

Plans for the proposed project are attached to this public notice.

MITIGATION PLAN: The applicant has submitted a compensatory mitigation plan (CMP) to compensate for permanent and temporary impacts to waters of the U.S. regulated by the Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers. To compensate for stream impacts, the applicant proposes to mitigation on-site through in-kind establishment and restoration of aquatic resources. The work required to install the mitigation sites would consist of installing intermittent stream channels in the proposed sediment ditches and ephemeral stream channels across the shallow sloped tops of Valley Fills 2 and 4. Upon installation, any unstable channel banks noted to exist would be stabilized by compaction of the bank and adjacent material. Construction of the mitigation sites would take place as mining activities are completed and site reclamation is performed in each area of the site. The ephemeral stream sections and attenuation basins would be constructed before the intermittent stream sections in the areas, to the greatest extent practicable. Constructing and planting of the stream sections before constructing the intermittent stream sections to the greatest extent practicable is expected to minimize the need for removing sediment from constructed intermittent stream sections.

After grade release and the sediment ditches can be removed, mitigation can be completed by removing the earthen barriers in the sediment ditches, constructing stream segments in these locations and performing the final breach of each sediment ditch at its corresponding National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) outfall. In order to prevent sediment transport from the site, the breach at each NPDES outfall would be the last phase of construction in each area.

Initial physical and biological improvements in the mitigation plan would be completed no later than the first full growing season following permission granted to modify the sediment ditches to the greatest extent practicable. The goal of the mitigation plan is to create 22,199 linear feet of self-sustaining, stable intermittent and ephemeral stream environment consisting of a natural stream and riparian habitat.

In addition, the affected stream channels (areas affected by proposed sediment ponds and the associated sediment transport) would be restored to their approximate pre-mining contours. The contours of the restored stream channels would be based on actual pre-mining cross sections.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: A Section 401 Water Quality Certification is required for this project. It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain certification from the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES: The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) has been consulted and it has been determined there are no properties currently listed on the register that are in the area affected by the project. A copy of this public notice will be sent to the State Historic Preservation Office for their review. Comments concerning archeological sensitivity of a project area should be based upon collected data.

ENDANGERED/THREATENED SPECIES REVIEW: The applicant retained the services of BHE Environmental, Inc. to conduct a bat mist net survey to determine presence or probable absence of the Indiana bat. Four mist net sites were selected and surveyed between August 5 and 10, 2003. Thirty seven bats representing seven species were captured during the survey. One of these captured species was an adult male endangered Indiana bat (Myotis sodalis). Additionally, a survey of an abandoned mine opening (in an old fan house) was conducted to determine if the opening had suitable bat habitat characteristics that could support summer or winter colonies of the endangered Virginia big-eared bat, Corynorhinus townsendii virginianus or provide hibernaculum for the Indiana bat. The survey revealed the mine was totally collapsed within four feet of the opening. Therefore, there are no further issues to address regarding endangered bat species use of portals in the project area.

To avoid direct take of the Indiana bat, the applicant has agreed to conduct timber removal operations during the bat's hibernation period, from November 15 to March 31, for the life of the project. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service has concluded there would be sufficient roosting and foraging habitat remaining in areas adjacent to the permit area and the proposed project is not likely to adversely affect the Indiana bat. Therefore, neither a biological assessment nor further consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act is warranted for these endangered species.

This public notice serves as a request to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for any additional information they may have on whether any listed or proposed to be listed endangered or threatened species may be present in the area which would be affected by the activity, pursuant to Section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1972 (as amended).

PUBLIC INTEREST REVIEW AND COMMENT: Any person who has an interest that may be adversely affected by the issuance of a permit may request a public hearing. The request must be submitted in writing to the District Engineer on or before the expiration date of this notice and must clearly set forth the interest which may be adversely affected and the manner in which the interest may be adversely affected by the activity.

Interested parties are invited to state any objections they may have to the proposed work. The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit that reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors that may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; of those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. In addition, the evaluation of the impact of the activity on the public interest will include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, under the authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act. Written statements on these factors received in this office on or before the expiration date of this public notice will become a part of the record and will be considered in the final determination. A permit will be granted unless its issuance is found to be contrary to the public interest.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

If you have any questions concerning this public notice, please call Mrs. Teresa Spagna of the South Regulatory Section at 304-399-5710.

Ginger Mullins, Chief
Regulatory Branch

Table A
Kingston Resources, Inc.
Ewing Fork No. 2 Surface Mine
Jurisdictional Waters Impact Summary

	Perr	Permanent Intermittent Stream Impacts	Permanent Ephemeral Stream Impacts		Temporary Intermittent Stream Impacts	Tary the at	Temporary Ephemeral Stream Impacts		Secondary Intermittent Stream Impacts	2 1 2	Secondary Ephemeral Stream Impacts	
Structure	feet	acres	Feet	acres	feet	acres	feet	acres	feet a	acres	feet	acres
Valley Fill No. 1	029	0.083	1180	0.108								
Pond No. 1					450	0.058						
Vallev Fill No. 1A			642	0.063								
Pond No. 1A					100	0.010	200	0.016				
Vallev Fill No. 2	550	0.108	2596	0.427								
Pond No. 2					150	0.021						
											-	
Isolated Waters											1320	0.310
Valley Fill No. 3	4791	1.21	3770	0.736								
Pond No. 3					200	0.160						
											350	0.059
Isolated Waters												
Valley Fill No. 4	1513	0.264	2037	0.379								
Pond No. 4					250	0.035						
Pond No. 5					270	0.045						
Total	7.524	1.655	10,225	1.713	1,720	0.329	200	0.016			1670	0.369

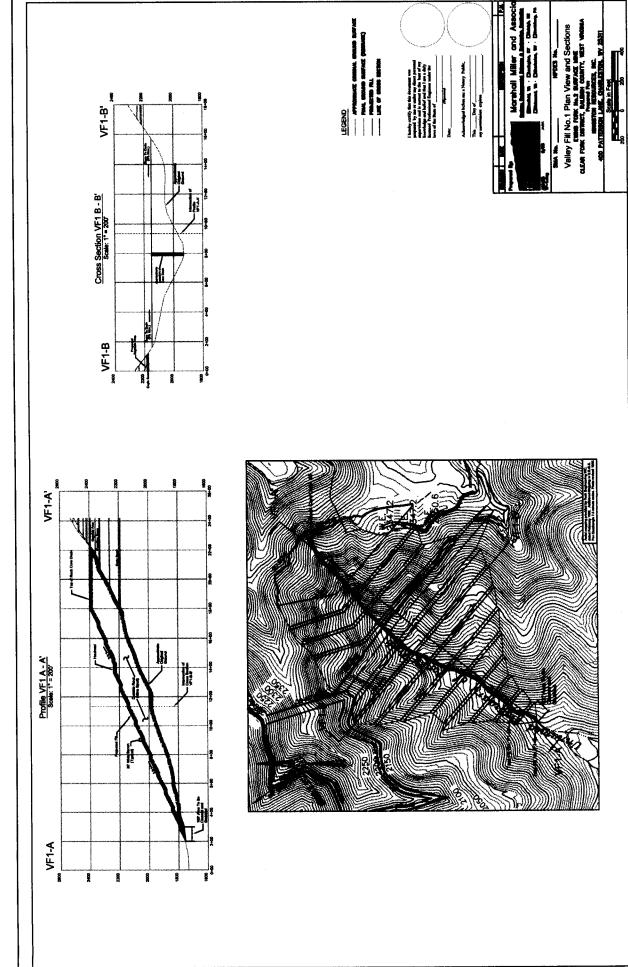
Table B
Kingston Resources, Inc.
Ewing Fork No. 2 Surface Mine
Affected Drainage Areas

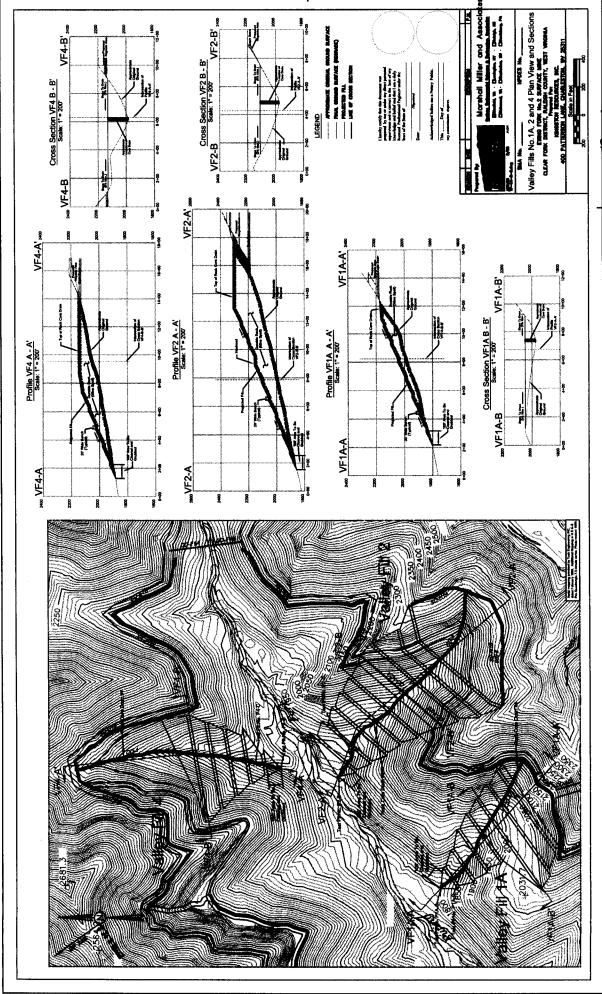
Activity	Drainage area to toe (Acres)
Valley Fill 1	77.26
Valley Fill 1A	29.66
Valley Fill 2	46.42
Valley Fill 3	213.26
Valley Fill 4	63.70

Table B
Kingston Resources, Inc.
Ewing Fork No. 2 Surface Mine
Total Fill Volume/Valley Fill Disposal Site

Disposal Site	Volume of Fill Material (cubic yards)
Valley Fill 1	6,160,318
Valley Fill 1A	816,462
Valley Fill 2	1,934,601
Valley Fill 3	1,995,967
Valley Fill 4	985,927

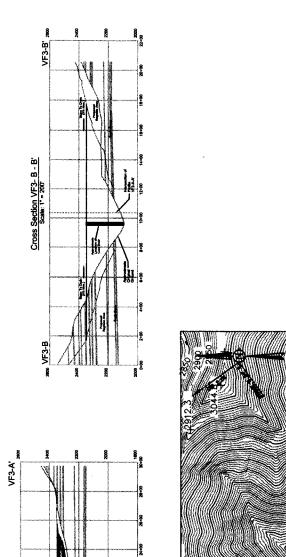






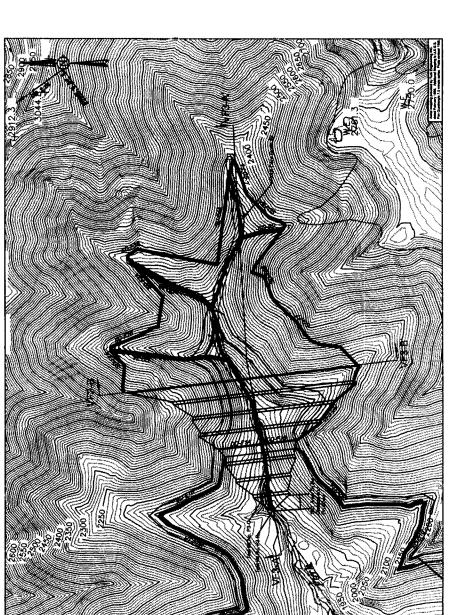
SOFS

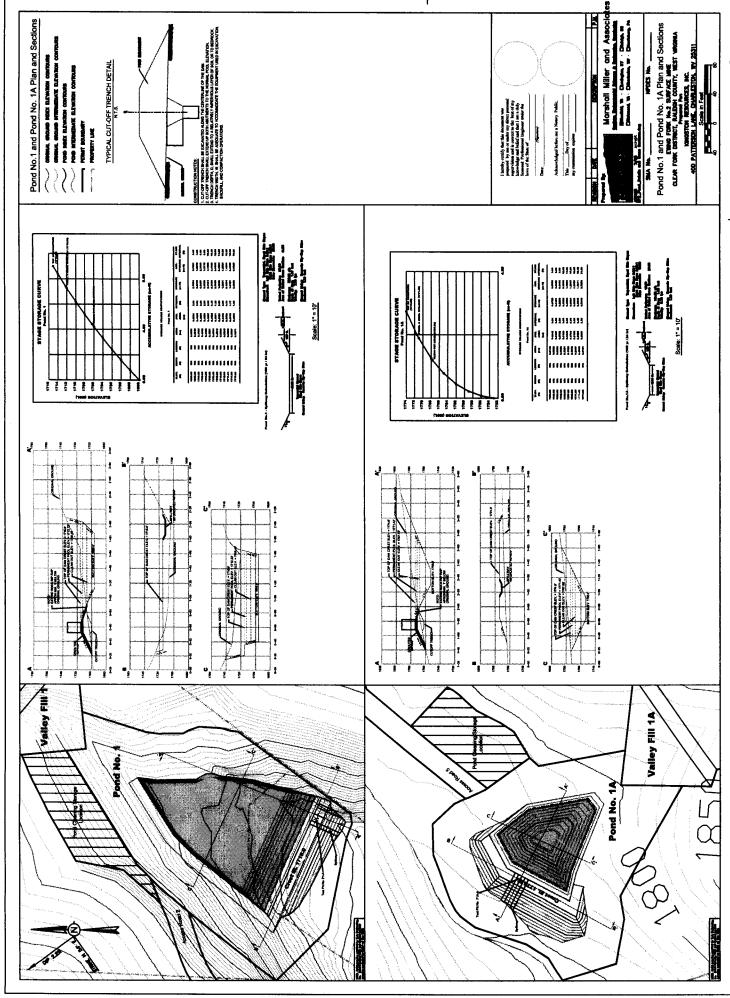
LAC CHARSTRE IN 23311 Scale in Feet 3 20 40 4 40 + 8



Profile VF3- A - A' Scale: 1" * 200'

VF3-A





50F8

60 of 8

70F8

8 of 8